Testimony by Charles Reinhardt on HB142

December 5, 2018

Chair Coley, Vice Chair Uecker, Ranking Member Schiavoni, and the members of the Senate Government Oversight and Reform committee. My name is Charles Reinhardt. I live in Upper Arlington, Ohio, and I am here today to ask you to restore the original language of HB 142 as it was introduced, and pass the bill out of committee to the full Senate, where I hope it will pass and then be enacted into law.

In support of this bill I want to relate to this committee a conversation I had with my son-in-law who is a police officer in St. Joseph Missouri. Sometime ago when he and I were discussing duty of a concealed carry licensee to inform a law enforcement officer, he had these remarks to make about it. First, he said that anytime he approaches someone he assumes there is a gun present. That way he can always be prepared to act appropriately if it turns out to be true. Secondly, he said that if any officer is relying on the person with whom they are interacting to inform that they are carrying a weapon, they are doing it all wrong, because the person who is going to be a threat to the officer will never disclose that they have a weapon no matter what the law requires. I think these two remarks are common sense.

As for myself, I keep my concealed carry license right with my driver’s license and insurance card in my wallet, and I will always choose to inform an officer if the occasion arises, which has happened to me once. But I believe there is a vast difference between what a person considers sensible to do voluntarily and what the law mandates they do under threat of punishment. Nor do I believe informing the law enforcement officer does anything to keep the officer safer, for the reason articulated by my son-in-law, that the law-abiding person who is willing to inform is not a threat to the officer anyway.

As for the safety of the person the officer approaches, HB142 in its original form leaves intact the part of law requiring the person not touch their gun at all, and that is all that is needed to prevent a misunderstanding leading to tragedy.

Thank you for hearing me today. I would be happy to answer any questions.